Virtual fest! Catch 12 free films online

PLAY, 1D

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Detroit Free Press

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OPERATION GRIDLOCK

Frustration clogs capital

CORONAVIRUS UPDATE

Infection totals

▮ Michigan: At least 1,921 deaths, 28,059 cases
▮ U.S.: 28,364 deaths, 637,359 cases
▮ World: 134,354 deaths, 2,060,927 cases

*As of 9 p.m. Wednesday

Crime down, but folks are stir crazy
2A

Virus rate soars at Michigan prison
METRO, 4A

Ice rinks could be used as morgues
METRO, 4A

Gov: Protesters put others at risk
7A

Chloroquine study shut down
NATION+WORLD, 13A

Halt of WHO funds sparks rebuke
NATION+WORLD, 13A

Solidarity a myth during pandemic
BRIAN DICKERSON, 14A

Student loan help is temporary
SUSAN TOMPOR, 1B

Camera operator recounts infection
SPORTS, 1C

Detroit theater gets $10K grant
PLAY, 2D

Protesters block traffic and stand on the steps around the Michigan Capitol building in Lansing on Wednesday. The protesters were trying to send a message to Gov. Gretchen Whitmer that her measures to curb the coronavirus infection rate have gone too far. MANDI WRIGHT/DETROIT FREE PRESS

Thousands protest stay-at-home, many not wearing masks

Paul Egan
Detroit Free Press | USA TODAY NETWORK
and Kara Berg
Lansing State Journal | USA TODAY NETWORK

LANSING – Demonstrators drove thousands of vehicles — many draped with protest signs — to Michigan's state Capitol on Wednesday, loudly protesting Gov. Gretchen Whitmer's stay-at-home order intended to fight the coronavirus pandemic.

Police watched as horns honked and commercial and private vehicles from around the state jammed Capitol Avenue and other streets surrounding Michigan's seat of government.

"Liberty once lost is lost forever," read a sign draped across a commercial van. "Security without liberty is called prison," read another, stretched across the Capitol's front lawn. "Recall Whitmer," a third sign said.

Organizers said they expected thousands

See PROTEST, Page 7A

Marchers, next time stay in your cars ... and listen to experts

Shawn Windsor
Columnist
Detroit Free Press
USA TODAY NETWORK

Some just want to return to work. It's hard to blame them for that. And if it were just folks gathering in desperation because they can't pay rent or buy food, well, let the revolution begin.

Yet Wednesday's Operation Gridlock protest at the Michigan State Capitol building wasn't simply about the fear of hunger or homelessness. It was about the misplaced fear of tyranny.

"Don't Tread On Me," a flag read, its yellow fabric blowing next to the red, white and blue.

"Live free or die," read a sign made of cardboard, held proudly by a protester apparently unaware that he was, at that mo-

See WINDSOR, Page 8A

Layoffs sweeping through hospitals

DMC latest to announce cuts as revenue falls

Jennifer Dixon, Kristen Jordan Shamus
Detroit Free Press | USA TODAY NETWORK
and Robin Erb
Bridge Magazine

Even as the coronavirus pandemic roils Michigan's hospitals — sickening employees, inundating intensive care units and overflowing morgues — these health systems are laying off employees by the hundreds.

The hospitals, and hospital experts, blame declining revenues from lost patient office visits and postponed medical procedures, such as knee or hip replacements, for layoffs and pay cuts.

On Wednesday, the Detroit Medical Center announced it will furlough 480 employees, while the McLaren Medical Group will cut the hours of many of its 500 doctors, physician's assistants, nurse practitioners and nurse midwives.

A day earlier, Beaumont Health confirmed it would sideline one of its eight hospitals — Beaumont, Wayne — and hold it empty to serve "as a reserve COVID-19 hospital" at an undefined point in the future.

At least 300 workers at Beaumont's Wayne hospital were laid off, according to the Service Employee International Union's Healthcare Michigan, which represents about 1,000 employees at three of Beaumont's hospitals, including Wayne.

And on Monday, the president of the union that represents registered nurses at McLaren Macomb told the Free Press the hospital would lay off 16 to 20 operating and recovery room nurses this week.

While another large Detroit health care provider, the Henry Ford Health System, declined to say whether it was planning layoffs, it released this statement from Brenda Craig, vice president, integrated communications:

"There is no question that this pandemic is having a financial effect on our health system and we are continuing to assess the full impact as this crisis evolves. Like other health systems across our region, we are exploring a

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Clouds and sun. Forecast, **2A**

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Outbreak forces car dealers to shift gears

They're eyeing ways to curb employee, buyer contact

Jamie L. LaReau Detroit Free Press
USA TODAY NETWORK

Forget about fancy showrooms and free doughnuts. Car buyers now must take delivery of their new ride at home, at work or, sometimes, sitting near a dealership parking lot at a makeshift office.

"We're trying to be sensitive to what's going on and yet facilitate a transaction in a safe and respectful manner," said Paul Zimmermann, partner in Matick Automotive, which owns Matick Chevrolet in Redford Township and Matick Toyota in Macomb.

Zimmermann has sold cars for more than 20 years, yet he has been struggling to find the safest way to sell them now that Gov. Gretchen Whitmer lifted the three-week ban on new and used car sales, saying "automobile dealerships will now be allowed to open for remote sales, though showrooms must remain closed."

For some metro Detroit car dealers, it presents a predicament. They must protect the health of employees and customers while generating sales to keep revenues flowing. They are trying to work with customers, too, whether it be extending a lease, doing a trade or holding a car for a customer until showrooms can reopen.

"We're trying to provide a living for 160 families," said Zimmermann, referring to his employees. "But we're also following the CDC guidelines to keep everyone safe. So it's the

See CAR DEALERS, Page 8A

Rony Shikwana fills out paperwork before he takes delivery of a 2020 Toyota Tundra at Matick Toyota on Tuesday.
MANDI WRIGHT/DETROIT FREE PRESS